



## «aérostase»

Invited by the international contemporary music festival ISCM World New Music Days for its 2004 edition in Switzerland, Cod.Act created Aérostase, a performance for 200 saxophonists that takes place outdoors. The cluster of musicians is to be seen as a living body, a large, dense, shifting mass, animated by air fluxes, similar to a respiratory organ. Through alternating contractions and dilatations, the mass moves slowly, procession-wise. Sounds generated by it are reminiscent of the flux and reflux of pulmonary activity when solicited by a physical effort. Along its trajectory, fixed sound sources continuously broadcast mineral sounds to illustrate the friction of the mass against the walls of the buildings flanking the street along its progress.



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Concept:

The body

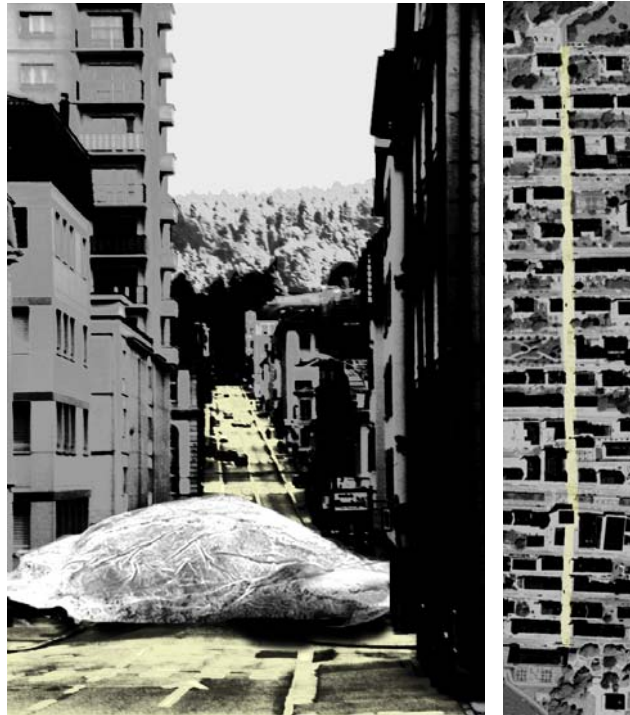
To take full advantage of the sonorous potential of the 200 musicians and their impact on the outdoor public area, Cod.Act chose to group the musicians in the shape of a large, dense, shifting mass, animated by air fluxes. This mass is to be seen as a living body, a respiratory organ where each alveoli corresponds to a saxophonist. Through alternating contractions and dilatations, the mass moves slowly, procession-wise along the streets, rhythmmed by its respiratory metabolism. Sounds from each instrument combine and add themselves creating an organic, sonorous, evolving universe made up of fluxes and refluxes typical of pulmonary activity when solicited by a physical effort.



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## The street

Space in the street is under heavy strain from the pressure and friction exercised by the mass as it progresses. To illustrate the interaction between the mass and the street, the latter broadcasts sounds through fixed sound sources along the route of the body. The surrounding architecture resounds. It reverberates a continuous sound akin to a concentrate of urban sounds gathered and stored by the walls since they were built. As the mass moves forwards, it infects the surrounding buildings and imprints it with its own sonorities. In specific locations called stasis, interaction between the mass and the architecture is intense, sounds collide, the mass stops its progression, moans and resumes its movement along the street. Sound vibrates from the buildings for a while, slowly fade until they vanish in the everyday urban sounds.

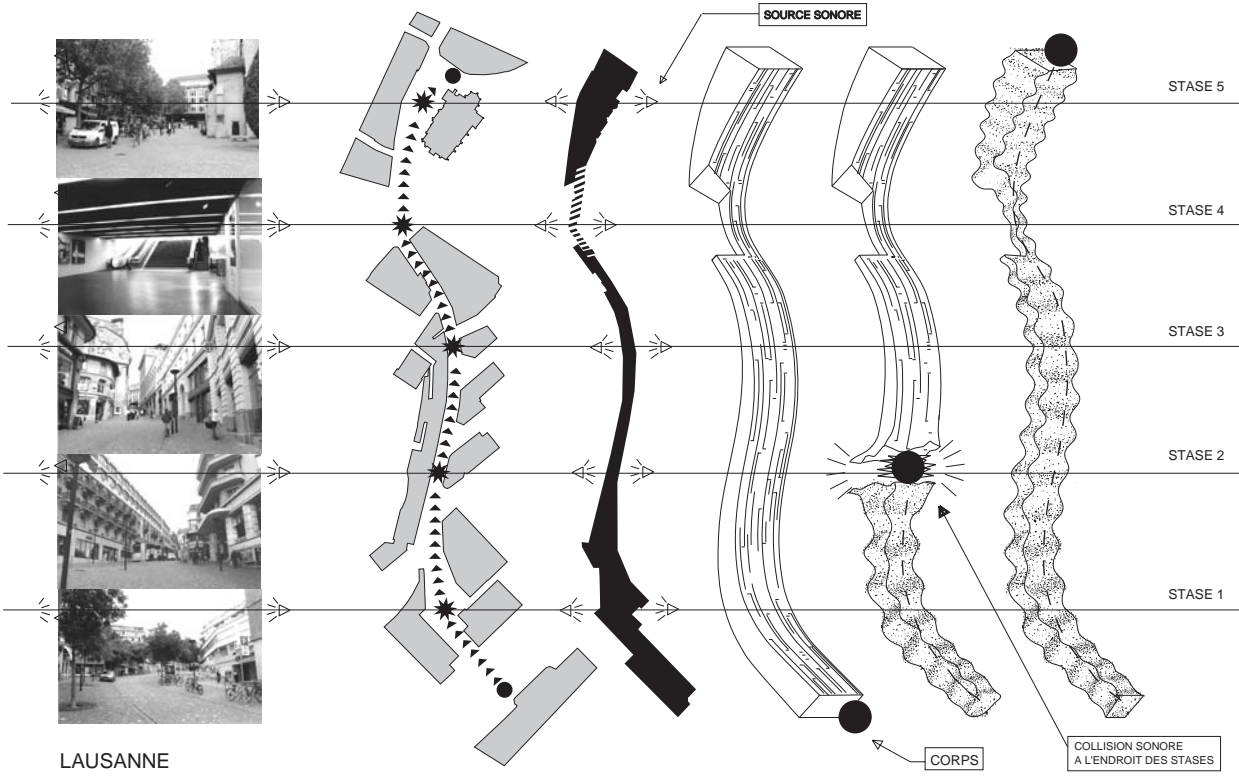


## The sound of the body

Sounds produced by the respiratory activity of a living body are the result of evolution and transformation of internal factors such as muscular impulsions, tension and torsion of tissues. This respiratory activity is the core of a written musical score interpreted by 200 musicians. To preserve a harmonic coherence, it was developed based on the analysis of concrete sounds. The result is the frequencial content of the initial sounds which was used as raw material to create the musical work.

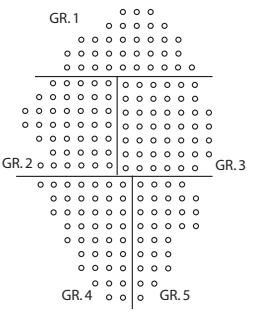
The body is made up of 5 groups of musicians in which the saxophones are distributed according to their range, deep, medium or high-pitched. The live and organic appearance and characteristic behaviour of breathing are rendered by interactions between the different groups. These feed different strengths between the groups that are added, come into equilibrium or oppose each other, creating a constant harmonic tension.

These variations in tension also reflect the nervous state of the mass. In the musical score, these appear in the dynamic and in the way in which the musical elements follow each other, evolve and change. Each musician has a CD player and an earplug type of headphone. The CD players are all synchronised and broadcast all along the performance indications on the play and interpretation specific to the range of the instrument. It is in fact a vocal musical score.



LAUSANNE

STRUCTURE DE LA COMPOSITION SONORE DU CORPS (RESPIRATION)



Axe vertical:  
Echelle fréquentielle

Axe horizontal:  
Temps

Surfaces géométriques:  
Expression graphique des flux sonores

Hachures verticales:  
Densité des flux sonores

Colonnes encadrées:  
Techniques de synthèse utilisées pour la construction des agrégats sonores.

